

Teachers' notes

Writing your own poems

Children can use the ideas and techniques below to write their own poems

- Read the poems and discuss the children's likes, dislikes, puzzles and patterns (use **Photocopiable 3**).
- Explain ideas by referring to the poems.
- Discuss moods and how the images help to create these.
- Make a list of the 'special techniques' that I have used below to write a poem – choosing powerful words, surprising and unusual word combinations, alliteration, similes, metaphors and personification.

Poem 1: At The window listening... (see **Photocopiable 6**)

- To write this poem I pretended that I was like the woman just dreaming away and listening to all the sounds around me. I made a list of the possible sounds and objects around her – chatting, wind, radio, cat, bird, swan, children, and so on. Then I turned each idea into a line or two.

Poem 2: From the balcony I can see... (see **Photocopiable 7**)

- Again, I pretended that I was on the balcony and made a list of everything that I could see in the picture. Then I took each item and tried to write a short poetic line or two about it, using my 'special techniques'.

Poem 3: Scarlet poppies...

(see **Photocopiable 8**)

- I began by looking at the painting and jotting down the middle of the page the key things I could see that I wanted to write about. For example:

guardsmen

railings

- Then I began to add to these words. At first I said the guardsmen were like red peacocks, but then I changed it to scarlet poppies because I was thinking of soldiers who died in the war and were remembered by poppies. I wanted this happy time to be contrasted by a sad memory. They are like peacocks because the male peacocks strut about, showing off their fine feathers like the uniforms. The railings look like spears to me and are regimented in a row like soldiers. The words poppies/peacocks/past and lined/like and railings/rack all alliterate. There are some internal sounds that echo each other, such as the 'ar' sound within guardsmen, are, scarlet, past, dark.

- I carried on choosing different things I could see, like the tree, and then just added words. Children can try this out by jotting down key words – things they can see – and then building words either side, trying to use alliteration, similes and metaphor.

Pie Corbett is a poet, author and freelance educational consultant

